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VICE-PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 9

Election to the office of the Vice President was necessitated following a surprise resignation by Jagdeep Dhankhar on July 21 citing ill health

ELECTION COMMISSION ISSUES SCHEDULE

As per the schedule announced by the ECI, a notification calling the election to the post of the Vice President of India would be announced on August 7 and the last date of making nomination would be August 21, with the scrutiny of the nominations scheduled to take place on August 22. The ECI said the last date for withdrawal of nominations is August 25

HOW DOES THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE LOOK LIKE

- The Electoral College consists of 788 MPs, including 233 elected and 12 nominated members of Rajya Sabha and 543 Lok Sabha lawmakers; 5 vacancies in RS and 1 in LS means 782 MPs can vote
- The election is conducted through proportional representation through single transferable vote; each vote carries equal value | P11

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WITH 293 LOK SABHA MPS AND 133 IN RAJYA SABHA, BJP HAS CLEAR EDGE



NEW RECIPROCAL TARIFF



Start date of the levies pushed to August 7 India bunched with small nations in high US duty rates

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

WITH the US embarking on a massive 'protectionism' era, India stands to be the biggest collateral damage of this exercise. The newly modified tariffs announced by the US government on Friday placed India among the major economies facing the highest duty rates — 25% or more. Other countries in this bracket are mostly smaller or geopolitically isolated nations such as Syria, Laos and Iraq. However, he pushed its start date to August 7, injecting a little more uncertainty.

What is particularly concerning is that most ASEAN and South Asian countries — key competitors in labour-intensive exports such as textiles and leather — have been spared the steep hikes. Vietnam, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Cambodia now fall in the 19-20% tariff range.

While China has been excluded from the latest tariff list, an earlier executive order on May 12 mandated a 34% tariff on its goods. The current executive order says the May 12 order remains in force.

This means India still technically enjoys a lower tariff than China. However, the margin has narrowed, and given China's well-known strength in low-cost manufacturing, that slight rate difference could easily be offset by sheer scale and pricing efficiency.

What has baffled many trade experts is that Vietnam, with which the US had a trade deficit of \$113 billion in 2024—the largest in Asia after China—has managed to stay within the 20% bracket. That said, the order clarifies that any transshipments through third countries like Vietnam will attract a 40% duty.

Bangladesh, another direct competitor to India in textiles, has also been placed in the 20% tariff slab. The textile sector has already sought financial help to prevent massive job losses. Pakistan, which doesn't pose significant competition in most export sectors, has received a 19% tariff rate — a development that is seen as more of a diplomatic win for India's western neighbour than a commercial threat.

Negotiations are on, but India is unlikely to yield on issues such as GM foods and dairy products. For now, India is staring at a 25% tariff wall, unless it chooses to bend over backwards to accommodate Trump's whims and fancies. Economists hope that developed markets like the EU and UK would help India absorb some of the shock from US tariffs. "I remain hopeful that FTAs with other large economies will help offset some of the losses... Together, the UK and Eurozone account for over 18% of India's export value," says Debopam Chaudhari, chief economist, Piramal Group. P14



Randhir Jaiswal, MEA spokesperson

India and Russia have a time-tested partnership. Ties with various countries should not be seen from the prism of a third country



Arunish Chawla, DIPAM Secretary

We are doing capital review of all PSUs each week and working on strategies to insulate our economy from geopolitical risks



Rakesh Mehra, CITI Chairman

US substantially reduce tariffs for competing nations like B'desh will compound the difficulties for India's textile and apparel exporters



Debopam Chaudhari, Piramal Group

FTAs with large economies such as UK and EU will help offset some of the losses arising from a slowdown in trade with the US

Prajwal convicted in rape case

Emotional breakdown

Soon after the judge pronounced the verdict, Prajwal Revanna, who was present in the courtroom, bowed his head and broke down. He was later escorted back to the prison under tight security. His father HD Revanna, who too was present in the court, refused to react to reporters' queries

Scientific evidence corroborated the victim's testimony. Her courage to testify played a crucial role

Ashok Nayak, SPP

RAKSHITH GOWDA @Bengaluru

A special court on Friday found former Member of Parliament from the Hassan Lok Sabha constituency Prajwal Revanna guilty in a rape case filed by a domestic worker. The quantum of punishment will be pronounced on Saturday.

Prajwal, who is the grandson of former prime minister HD Deve Gowda and nephew of Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy, was accused of raping the 47-year-old woman from KR Nagar in Mysuru, who was working as domestic help at his farmhouse in Holenarasipura in Hassan.

The woman, who filed her complaint with the cyber crime police of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on May 5, 2024, had alleged that Prajwal raped her multiple times at his Gannigada farmhouse in Holenarasipura and at a residence at Basavanagudi in Bengaluru. She had also alleged that he had video recorded the act.

The state government had constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) within the



Hassan former MP Prajwal Revanna on the premises of a special court after his conviction, in Bengaluru on Friday | EXPRESS

CID to probe this and three other cases registered against Prajwal and others, including his parents - former minister and Holenarasipura MLA HD Revanna and Bhavani Revanna.

The SIT filed a 1,632-page chargesheet in September 2024, listing 113 witnesses.

Judge Santhosh Gajanan Bhat of the Special Court for the trial of criminal cases against present and former MPs/MLAs, which concluded

the trial on July 18, held Prajwal guilty of the charges. The minimum punishment for the offences committed by Prajwal is 10 years.

He has been lodged at the Bengaluru Central Prison for the past 14 months. Senior advocates Ashok Nayak and BN Jagadeesha served as special public prosecutors (SPP) in the case.

While Prajwal is convicted in one case, three other cases are still pending against him. P4

ACCUSED SHOT AT Stand-in driver, aide held for boy's murder

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

A stand-in driver, known to the family for the last eight months, and his associate were arrested for allegedly kidnapping and murdering 13-year-old A Nischith, a resident of Vysya Bank Colony at Arekere in Hulimavu. The police opened fire at them when they tried to attack policemen with lethal weapons. The main accused was shot in both legs, while his associate was shot in the right leg.

The main accused, identified as 25-year-old Gurumurthy, is a resident of Weavers' Colony, while his associate is his friend Gopala alias Gopal Krishna, 27, of Tavarekere.

Gurumurthy had earlier been arrested in a POCOS case for allegedly raping a 14-year-old girl. He allegedly also wanted to sexually abuse Nischith, but could not as the boy started crying, asking to be dropped home. The police found the two accused at Bilvaradhalli in the Bannerghatta forest area on Kaggalipura Main Road. CONTINUED ON: P3



Gurumurthy



Gopal Krishna

Draft poll roll out; EC pans Rahul's vote theft charge

PREETHA NAIR & MUKESH RANJAN @ New Delhi

THE Election Commission of India (ECI) on Friday published the draft electoral rolls of Bihar after completing the first phase of collecting enumeration forms as part of its Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise in the state.

There were 7.93 crore registered voters in Bihar before the roll revision process began last month. More than 7.24 crore electors filled up the enumeration forms; and all were included in the draft roll. As per SIR orders, no name can be deleted from the draft electoral roll without giving a hearing to the elector. In the next one month, any elector or any political party can file claims and objections to the draft roll.

Earlier, speaking to reporters outside the Parliament House, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged "vote theft by the ECI for the BJP."

"I have said vote chori is happening and now we have proof that the Election Commission is involved in it. I am saying this with 100 per cent proof. As soon as we release it, the whole country would know that EC is indulging in vote chori. It is doing it for the BJP," Rahul alleged.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi speaks to reporters after the Monsoon session in New Delhi on Friday | P11

'Got our probe done, found an atom bomb'

New Delhi: Rahul Gandhi said the Congress has proof that vote theft took place in Maharashtra and MP, and is expected in Bihar too. "We got our own investigation done. What we have found is an atom bomb," he said

leged. Gandhi's remarks evoked a sharp response from the poll panel that termed his allegations as "baseless and wild allegations".

Responding to the allegations, the EC said its primary focus remains ensuring free and fair elections. "The EC ignores such baseless allegations being made on a daily basis and, despite daily threats being given, urges all election officials to disregard such irresponsible statements and continue to work impartially."

OVAL TEST

India at 75/2 (Jaiswal 51* A Deep 4*) in the second innings lead England (247) by 52 runs at stumps on Day 2 of at The Oval on Friday. Mohammed Siraj and Prashid Krishna took four wickets each to give India a firm stand | P17

Southern states account for over 27% toll activity

VINCENT D'SOUZA @ Mangaluru

Tamil Nadu has emerged as the frontrunner in FASTag transactions across India over the last three-and-a-half years, according to data presented in the Lok Sabha. With over 1.26 billion transactions between 2022 and June 2025, Tamil Nadu has maintained the top position in FASTag usage every year, outpacing other high-traffic states like Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.

The digital toll collection system, FASTag, has seen rapid adoption since its nationwide

enforcement in February 2021. The system now accounts for over 98% of toll collection at National Highway fee plazas, as per the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Following Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka reported 1.19 billion and 1.12 billion transactions respectively in the same period. Rajasthan and Maharashtra also showed high volumes with over 1 billion and 919 million transactions each.

While Tamil Nadu has maintained the highest figures annually, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka have demonstrated



faster growth. Karnataka, for instance, saw a 28.7% increase in transactions from 2022 to 2024, while UP recorded a growth of 30.9%. In contrast, Tamil Nadu grew by around 16.8% over the two years.

Southern India - comprising Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and

EXPRESS READ

Pesticide mixed in school water tank

Shivamogga: Miscreants mixed pesticide into the drinking water tank of a government school in Hoovinaikone village of Hosanagara taluk. The incident came to light on Thursday morning after kitchen staff detected a foul smell and alerted the headmaster. CM Siddaramaiah called it a "terrorist act" intended to cause mass harm | P7

B'deshi model acted as India visa consultant

Kolkata: Bangladeshi model and actress Shanta Pal, who has been arrested in Kolkata, had become a consultant to others on how to obtain visas to India, according to police sources. Shanta had advised many Bangladeshi citizens to apply for medical visas. Investigators are looking at how many people got those visas | P12

Defamation case: SC extends relief to Tharoor

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday extended the stay on trial court proceedings against Congress MP Shashi Tharoor in a defamation case filed by BJP leader Rajiv Babbar against the former's alleged "scorpion on Shivling" remark targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi | P11

AKSHAY KUMAR @ Chennai

SUPERSTAR Shah Rukh Khan won his maiden best actor award for *Jawan*, and shared the honour with Vikrant Massey for *12th Fail*, at the 71st National Awards that were announced on Friday. Another first-time winner was Rani Mukerji, who bagged the best actress award for *Mrs Chatterjee Vs. Norway*.

Hindi films were the big win-

ners of this edition as Vidhu Vinod Chopra's *12th Fail* bagged the best feature film, and Karan Johar's *Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani* won the best popular film for wholesome entertainment award. Interestingly, the Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt-starrer also won choreographer Vaibhavi Merchant her second national award after her maiden win in 2000 for *Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam*'s Dhol Baaje. The awards



were for films released in 2023. *Sam Bahadur* and *Animal* were the other significant win-

ners. While the Meghna Gulzar film won the prizes for best costume, best make-up, and best film for promoting national, social, and environmental values, the Sandeep Reddy Vanga directorial won the awards for best music director — background score (Harshavardhan Rameshwar), best sound design (Sachin Sudhakaran and Hariharan Muralidharan), and a special mention for re-recording mixing by M R Rajakrishnan.

The polarising Sudipto Sen film, *The Kerala Story*, won him his maiden award for best director and a best cinematographer nod for Prasanthanu Mohapatra. *Jawan* also won Shilpa Rao her first award for best singer.

The South representation was quite strong this year, too, as in addition to the best regional films, there were multiple winners in the major categories.

CONTINUED ON: P7

Kandeelu wins best Kannada film award

Kandeelu, a Kannada film directed and produced by Yashodha Prakash Kottukattira, took home the prize for Best Kannada Feature Film. Inspired by real events, the film explores the struggles of agrarian life and the emotional cost of survival. In the non-feature category, Mysuru-based filmmaker Chidananda Naik was recognised for his short film 'Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know', with the Best Script. The film had won the La Cinef Award at the Cannes Film Festival.